

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229189 TOSEC 270195

EXDIS-EAGLEBURGER FROM HARTMAN, BELGRADE FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PINS, PFOR, YO, US

SUBJECT: TWA SKYJACKING: DEMARCHE TO PETKOVIC

REFS: (A) STATE 226561 (NOTAL), (B) SECTO 27040 (NOTAL),
(C) STATE 225383

1. I CALLED IN PETKOVIC AT 1600 SEPTEMBER 15 TO GIVE HIM
THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICIAL REACTION TO HIS SEPTEMBER 11
DEMARCHE TO EAGLEBURGER (REF C) AND TO SUBSEQUENT TANJUG
COMMENTARY. I PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ESSENTIALLY
VERBATIM:

-- MY GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS YUGOSLAV CONCERN ABOUT IMPLICA-
TIONS THIS INCIDENT HOLDS FOR ITS INTERESTS. I AM NEVER-
THELESS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE GOY THROUGH YOUR DEMARCHE TO
MR. EAGLEBURGER ON SEPTEMBER 11, SAW FIT TO LECTURE US IN
VERY UNHELPFUL TERMS AT A TIME WHEN RESPONSIBLE U.S. AND
FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND THE AIRLINE ITSELF WERE GRAPPLING
WITH THE CRISIS. MY GOVERNMENT IS GRAVELY CONCERNED ABOUT
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THE GOY'S CONTINUING ACCUSATIONS AGAINST US, AS EXPRESSED

BY TANJUG. THE INSINUATIONS THAT ELEMENTS OF THE USG ARE IN ANY WAY ASSOCIATED WITH AN ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN OR THAT THEY HAD ANY KIND OF INTENTIONAL ROLE IN ALLOWING DISSEMINATION OF CROATIAN SEPARATIST PROPAGANDA ARE FALSE AND UTTER NONSENSE.

-- CONCERNING GOY SUGGESTIONS THAT WE ARE NOT ACTIVELY PREVENTING ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERRORISM, I REAFFIRM WHAT WE HAVE TOLD YOU COUNTLESS TIMES. OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES ARE VIGOROUSLY PURSUING THEIR INVESTIGATION OF PREVIOUS CRIMES. OUR SECURITY AGENCIES HAVE RESPONDED QUICKLY AND ENERGETICALLY ON REPEATED OCCASIONS TO PROVIDE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE PROTECTION TO YOUR DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENTS. IN THE PRESENT INSTANCE, WE HAVE WORKED ACTIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY, ON ONE HAND, TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF INNOCENT VICTIMS AND RETURN THEM TO SAFETY AND, ON THE OTHER, TO APPREHEND THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS CRIME. THEY HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO OUR CUSTODY AND WILL BE PROSECUTED.

-- IN VIEW OF THIS, THE USG FINDS IT UNACCEPTABLE THAT THE GOY WOULD RESORT TO SUCH FALSE ACCUSATIONS AS CONVEYED IN YOUR DEMARCHE AND LATER BY TANJUG, ESPECIALLY WHEN, SO RECENTLY, THE GOY ITSELF FAILED TO TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO APPREHEND THE KNOWN INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST CRIMINAL "CARLOS", DESPITE CONFIRMED REPORTS OF HIS PRESENCE IN BELGRADE.

-- IN UNDERSECRETARY HABIB'S REMARKS TO AMBASSADOR BELOVSKI IN EARLY AUGUST WE EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO PUT THE POLEMICS BEHIND US. WE HAD HOPED THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT WAS LIKE-MINDED, AND WE ARE THEREFORE EXTREMELY DISTURBED BY ITS CONTINUED UNFOUNDED ACCUSATIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR RELATIONS WITH YUGOSLAVIA. WE HOPE AND EXPECT THE GOY WILL CEASE SUCH UNFOUNDED AND ILL-ADVISED PUBLIC ACCUSATIONS.

2. CONCLUDING THESE OFFICIAL REMARKS, I TOLD PETKOVIC THAT THIS INDICATES THE DEPTH OF OUR FEELING ON THIS MATTER. I ALSO STRESSED THAT WE HAD MADE A MAJOR EFFORT CONFIDENTIAL

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TO APPREHEND THE CRIMINALS AND THAT THEY WOULD BE DEALT WITH TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW.

3. PETKOVIC, SAYING HE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS BUT PROBABLY ARMED WITH BELGRADE COMMENTS ON EAGLEBURGER CONVERSATION, DECIDED THAT THE BEST DEFENSE WAS AN OFFENSE AND RESPONDED WITH THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

.- HE MAINTAINED THAT THE INSINUATIONS I HAD CITED ARE NOT NONSENSE. THE AMERICAN MEDIA COMMENTARY HAS DEVELOPED INTO A "HUGE, ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN" AND THERE HAVE EVEN BEEN EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY FOR THE TERRORISTS' CAUSE. HE CITED A CBS TELEVISION BROADCAST THAT HAD SHOWED A MAP OF CROATIA EXTENDING INTO NON-CROATIAN AREAS OF

YUGOSLAVIA (I TOLD HIM TO COMPLAIN TO CBS.) SINCE WORLD WAR II, THE US HAS NOT EXTRADITED A SINGLE WAR CRIMINAL. (HE CITED ARTUKOVIC.) NO TERRORIST HAS BEEN APPREHENDED. MRS. BUCIS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN ZAGREB IN 1970 AND WAS KNOWN TO US AUTHORITIES BUT HER ANTI-YUGOSLAV ACTIVITY HAD NOT BEEN STOPPED. (NOTETAKER SEYMOUR INTERJECTED THAT EVEN THE YUGOSLAV COURT HAD GIVEN HER A SUSPENDED SENTENCE, EVIDENTLY THINKING HER ONLY AN UNWITTING TOOL.)

-- NO CROATIAN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION IN THE US HAS EVER BEEN BANNED OR DISBANDED. PETKOVIC CITED THE CROATIAN CHURCH AND THE CROATIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL.

-- IT IS CLEAR THAT THE TERRORIST ACTIVITY OF SOME CENTERS IS A SERIOUS IMPEDIMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF US-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS. YUGOSLAVIA WANTS TO DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONS BUT CANNOT DO SO UNDER PRESSURE AND IT CANNOT TOLERATE TERRORIST ACTIVITY AGAINST IT. IN THE INTERESTS OF GOOD RELATIONS, THE GOY EXPECTS DECISIVE ACTION BY THE US AGAINST ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERRORISTS, AND IT EXPECTS A FIRM STATEMENT BY THE USG CONDEMNING CROATIAN TERRORISTS.

4. I COUNTERED THAT I COULD NOT ACCEPT HIS REMARKS, THAT WE HAVE ALREADY MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS CONDEMNING TERRORIST ACTIVITY, AND THAT WE DO NOT HAVE TO ACCEPT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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GOY VIEW OF WHAT WE SHOULD TELL OUR PUBLIC. I REAFFIRMED OUR SUPPORT OF YUGOSLAV UNITY AND INDEPENDENCE, STRESSING THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS RESOLUTELY SUPPORTED THIS AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. I SAID WE ARE NOT ABOUT TO GIVE UP OUR INTERNAL FREEDOM BECAUSE OF ACTS OF A FEW TERRORISTS OR BECAUSE OF YUGOSLAV COMPLAINTS.

5. PETKOVIC ACKNOWLEDGED THIS AND SAID THE GOY ONLY WANTS EFFECTIVE ACTION. I ASKED IF HE THOUGHT OUR APPREHENSION OF THESE HIJACKERS AND OUR ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO PROSECUTE THEM, AS WELL AS OUR RECENT INDICTMENTS AGAINST ANTI-SOVIET TERRORISTS WAS NOT EFFECTIVE ACTION. I SAID IT TAKES TIME TO FIND THE CULPRITS AND TO DEVELOP SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE BUT EXPRESSED OUR DETERMINATION TO PURSUE OUR INVESTIGATIONS AND BRING THE CRIMINALS TO JUSTICE.

I REAFFIRMED THAT WE HAVE CONDEMNED TERRORISM AND WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE STATEMENTS IMPUGNING ETHNIC GROUPS BECAUSE OF A SMALL NUMBER OF MALEFACTORS AMONG THEM. WE WILL NOT EQUATE ETHNIC GROUPS WITH TERRORISM.

5. PETKOVIC MADE NO RESPONSE TO MY STATEMENTS ABOUT CARLOS. ON LEAVING, HE OBSERVED TO HIS DEPARTMENT ESCORT THAT US-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS ARE AT THEIR WORST POINT IN 30 YEARS. ROBINSON

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